

BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE NEBRASKA STATE COLLEGES

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION\STUDENT AFFAIRS, MARKETING, AND ENROLLMENT

***ACTION:* First and Final Round Approval of Revisions to Board Policy 3400; Tuition Remission**

Revisions to Policy 3400 are required to implement the provisions of the First Responder Recruitment and Retention Act in LB 727 [2023] which expands the Law Enforcement Education Waiver to include law enforcement, professional firefighters and their dependents. Recipients receive a 100% tuition waiver for up to five (5) years. For Dependents the five (5) years must be consecutive. The revisions also set forth the eligibility and application requirements. Definitions have been added for law enforcement officer, professional firefighter, and legal dependents.

Law enforcement officers may use the waiver to pursue a baccalaureate degree program related to a career in law enforcement. Firefighters may use the waiver for a baccalaureate degree program in science or medicine that relates to a career in professional firefighting. Dependents may use the waiver to pursue any baccalaureate degree program. Dependents receiving the waiver are required to sign an agreement with the College indicating they will reside in Nebraska for at least five (5) years after receiving the tuition waiver.

The System Office recommends approval of the Revisions to Board Policy 3400; Tuition Remission.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Revisions to Board Policy 3400 (PDF)

Board of Trustees of the Nebraska State Colleges

Student Affairs

POLICY
NAME: Tuition Remission

POLICY
NUMBER: 3400

A. PURPOSE

To provide guidance to the Colleges regarding statutorily required, system-wide and College specific tuition remission programs.

B. DEFINITIONS

1. **Law Enforcement Officer (Officer):** For purposes of the First Responder Education Waiver, Law Enforcement Officer means any person who is responsible for the prevention or detection of crime or the enforcement of the penal, traffic, or highway laws of the State of Nebraska or any political subdivision of the state for more than one hundred (100) hours per year and who is authorized to make arrests.
2. **Legal Dependent (Dependent):** For purposes of the First Responder Education Waiver, Legal Dependent shall be given the same meaning as used for purposes of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
3. **Professional Firefighter (Firefighter):** For purposes of the First Responder Education Waiver, Professional Firefighter means a firefighter or firefighter-paramedic who is a member of a paid fire department of a municipality or a rural or suburban fire protection district in Nebraska, including a municipality having a home rule charter or a municipal authority created pursuant to a home rule charter that has its own paid fire department, and for whom firefighting is a full-time career.

1.4.

C. POLICY

1. **General**

It is the policy of the Board that financial assistance be made available to all qualifying students. In some instances, such assistance may be provided as tuition remission and/or waivers. Tuition remission represents a form of financial aid in which the College waives or foregoes all or a portion of a student's tuition charges. Tuition remission represents foregone revenue to the College and

should be used strategically to attract students based on academic performance, financial need, and/or other skills or attributes that will enhance the student body. For the purposes of this policy tuition remission is considered distinct from a scholarship or grant-in-aid funded through other means than tuition and fee revenue.

- 1.1. All of the programs described below are tuition remission programs, although the terms “scholarship” or “award” may be used interchangeably by the Colleges with the term “remission” or “waiver” because it is a term that has meaning to prospective students and their families.
- 1.2. Total remissions for all categories/programs, unless specifically accepted and approved by the Chancellor generally shall not exceed twenty-two percent (22%) of the College’s four-year average gross tuition less refunds, plus or minus the four-year average tuition remission bank. The tuition remission bank will be calculated using the previous four (4)-year’s unused or excess tuition remissions. Remissions provided on behalf of one of the other state Colleges as part of a Joint Enrollment course are outside of the twenty-two percent (22%) limit. Nothing herein shall prohibit the creation of additional tuition remission programs, which are outside of the twenty-two percent (22%) limit with the approval of the Chancellor. Remissions may be awarded up to the limits specified (if any) in each individual category below.
- 1.3. For each term, the total of all tuition waivers provided by a College to an individual student cannot exceed the amount of tuition charged to that student. Any tuition waivers outside the enumerated categories or beyond the limits specified in this policy require the written approval of the Chancellor. Tuition remissions awarded for online courses will not exceed the comparable amount provided for an on-campus course for a resident student. Unless otherwise stated herein or required by bargaining agreements, tuition remission and/or waivers apply to any academic session offered during the fall and/or spring terms during the applicable academic year.

2. System Remission Programs

System remission programs include waivers with common eligibility guidelines and parameters established across all Colleges. For certain programs, Colleges are afforded the opportunity to determine the number and award amounts. In all other situations, approval is required from the Chancellor to deviate from system remission programs or those that are bound by system program agreements with external partners.

2.1. Board of Trustees’ Scholarships

The Board of Trustees’ Scholarships are awarded by each College to students who are graduating from a Nebraska high school or who are residents of Nebraska who meet the following criteria: have standardized test scores of at least 25 for the ACT or 1200 composite for SAT or a

grade point average demonstrating academic excellence; are enrolling for the first time in a postsecondary institution; and such other factors which may be considered including but not limited to rank in class, as appropriate.

- The number of new Board of Trustees' scholarships to be awarded by each College for each academic year is based on the full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment at that College for the fall semester of the preceding academic year. Each College may award up to twenty (20) scholarships for the first one thousand (1,000) FTE students and one (1) additional scholarship for every two hundred (200) FTE beyond one thousand (1,000) for each academic year. The number of scholarships offered should be determined by each College based on the number of scholarships available and the yield experienced in prior years.
- The scholarships are not transferable from one College to another. The scholarship will be the waiver of resident tuition up to eighteen (18) credit hours per term not to exceed one hundred twenty-eight (128) credit hours. Each President, financial aid officer and/or scholarship committee shall act as an agent of the Board in administering the program as directed by the Board.
- The scholarship is renewable to the total value of the equivalent of eight (8) consecutive terms (excluding summer). The recipient may use the scholarship during the five (5) academic years following the initial use with a one (1) year delay in initial use allowable with the College's permission. Should original recipients stop out for a term or academic year before using the full value of the scholarship, the balance of the scholarship's value may be re-awarded.
- Board of Trustees' scholarships are renewable each academic year, provided the recipient maintains a 3.25 GPA and standards are met. The Chancellor may approve a waiver of this requirement for extenuating circumstances for an individual student on a one-time basis. Each College scholarship committee will review all renewal candidates and recommend action to the President.

2.2 Governor's Opportunity Award

The Governor's Opportunity Award is awarded by each College to one (1) resident student annually who graduated from a Nebraska high school or is a Nebraska resident who has a standardized test score of 21-24 for the ACT or 1060-1190 composite for SAT; and is enrolling for the first time in a postsecondary institution.

- One (1) student from each College is provided this award each year. The award is not transferable from one (1) College to another.
- The award will be a waiver of one-half of resident tuition for four (4) years (up to eighteen [18] credit hours per semester up to a maximum

of one hundred twenty-eight [128] hours toward an undergraduate degree.)

- The Governor's Opportunity Award is renewable each academic year, provided the recipient maintains a 3.25 GPA and standards are met. The President may approve a waiver of this requirement for extenuating circumstances for an individual student on a one-time basis. Any waivers granted must be reported to the Chancellor.
- No new awards will be made after the 2019-20 academic year and this program will sunset. All awards made up to and including the 2019 academic year will be honored consistent with the terms of this policy.

2.3 NSCS Advantage Program

The NSCS Advantage program is a system effort designed for students who enroll at one (1) of the Colleges as new first time freshmen and receive a federal Pell Grant. This program assures that qualified students will pay no tuition at any of the Nebraska State Colleges. Each participant in this program must be a Nebraska resident; receive a federal Pell Grant; enroll as a new first-time freshman at one (1) of the Colleges; and be enrolled in at least twelve (12) on-campus credit hours.

- The award is limited to a maximum of sixteen (16) credit hours per semester. Additional limitations are in place for the award of any remissions for online courses taken in addition to the twelve (12) on-campus credit hours. No new awards will be made after the 2019-20 academic year and this program will sunset. All awards made up to and including the 2019 academic year will be honored consistent with the terms of this policy.
- The award is not available for transfer students. A high school student who earns college credit while in high school is considered a first-time freshman when the student enrolls at one of the State Colleges following high school graduation.
- Participation is renewable for students as long as they meet the above criteria during all semesters they receive a Pell Grant. Continuation in the program requires the student to remain a federal Pell Grant recipient and continue to enroll in at least twelve (12) on-campus credit hours.
- For eligible participants, the program provides the difference between the cost of tuition and the amount of all other awards. Other awards include, but are not limited to, Pell, Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (SEOG), Nebraska Opportunity Grant (NOG), institutional waivers, and foundation scholarship assistance.

2.4 Employee Tuition Waivers

The employee waivers provide tuition waivers for one (1) course for each term to eligible employees. See Policies 5102, 5103 and 5104 and Collective Bargaining Agreements for details.

2.5 Immediate Family Tuition Remission

The immediate family tuition waivers provide a sixty-seven percent (67%) reduction in tuition for immediate family (spouse and children who are twenty-four [24] years of age or younger) of eligible employees. See Policies 5102, 5103 and 5104 and Collective Bargaining Agreements for details.

2.6 Survivors of Deceased Employees

These are full tuition waivers to spouse and/or children of College employees who die while under full-time, permanent system employment. Children must have been in a dependent status at the time of the employee's death. Waivers may be used only toward an undergraduate degree or to complete a graduate degree in progress. This remission is offered on a space available basis only, but may be used at any College during any term, including the summer term.

2.7 Cooperative Schools Waivers

Each College is authorized to award waivers to students entering college for the first time from schools providing student teaching facilities, such waivers are to be for one-half of the tuition costs per term for up to eighteen (18) credit hours per term, not to exceed one hundred twenty-eight (128) credit hours toward undergraduate degrees. The College may award one (1) such waiver for each three (3) student teachers served. Waivers are renewable each academic year, provided the recipient maintains a 2.5 GPA.

2.8 Clinical Practice Supervision Waivers

PK-12 educators who serve as clinical practice cooperating educators for the College's educator candidates will receive a tuition waiver for three (3) credits of graduate MSE coursework. The tuition waiver must be used within one (1) year of service in this role.

2.9 Public Health Early Admission Student Track (PHEAST) Waivers

PHEAST is a cooperative program between the University of Nebraska Medical Center's College of Public Health (UNMC CoPH) and the Colleges to provide tuition waivers for selected students accepted into PHEAST as determined in the program agreement. Selection of participants, participation requirements and waiver provisions are governed by the Program Agreement with the UNMC CoPH.

2.10 Rural Health Opportunities Program (RHOP) Waivers

RHOP is a cooperative program between the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) and the Colleges to provide tuition waivers for

selected students accepted into RHOP as determined in the program agreement. Selection of participants is determined by representatives of UNMC and the Colleges.

3. College-Directed Remissions

College-directed remissions provide the Colleges flexibility in managing waivers for targeted student populations. Each College shall establish: 1) minimum guidelines and requirements for any additional remissions; 2) requirements for remaining in good academic standing; and 3) any renewal requirements for students. Policies and procedures for these awards shall be set by each College, approved by the President, and reported to the Chancellor. These College directed tuition remissions may apply to any academic session offered during the fall and/or spring terms during the applicable academic year as determined by the College, unless specifically stated herein. For reporting purposes, each of the categories below shall be used for tracking.

3.1. Corporate and Business Partnership Incentive

Tuition remission provided to employees of Corporate and Business Partners taking online courses as part of an agreement approved in advance by the Board of Trustees. Colleges considering such an agreement must obtain approval from the Chancellor in advance of any discussions with potential partners.

3.2. Athletic Waivers

Waivers made to athletes participating in varsity and junior varsity sport sanctioned through the conference or athletic association to which each College belongs. The Colleges, based on funding available, may award no more than thirty percent (30%) of their remissions toward athletic scholarships. A College may, with the Chancellor's approval, increase its athletic waivers up to the maximum allowed by the conference or athletic association to which each College belongs. Full or partial waivers to athletes, residents or nonresidents, may be made at the discretion of each College within funding limits. Student athletes receiving renewable awards must maintain GPA requirements of the conference or athletic association.

3.3. Graduate Assistantships

The Colleges may provide a stipend established by the College and adjusted as necessary, in addition to a waiver of up to eighteen (18) hours of tuition per academic year, depending upon workload and term of appointment, to a student employed as a graduate assistant. The waiver can be applied to any academic session offered during the academic year, including the trailing summer term regardless of whether the graduate assistant is working during the summer term. Each College shall report its stipend policy to the Chancellor.

3.4. International Student Waiver

Waivers provided to qualified students who are citizens of other countries. The purpose is to provide opportunities to interact with the international community and bring diversity to the College.

3.5. Need-Based Tuition Waivers

Waivers provided based on student financial need or means based assessment by the Colleges. In most cases the waiver is used to supplement available federal financial or state assistance programs that include, but are not limited to, Pell, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG), Nebraska Opportunity Grant (NOG), and foundation scholarship assistance.

3.6. Phi Theta Kappa Community College Transfer Waiver

Tuition waivers to graduates of community colleges who have maintained a 3.5 grade point average and who were inducted into the Phi Theta Kappa Society. The purpose of the waiver is to encourage outstanding community college graduates to attend a State College. The waivers are renewable each academic session, provided the recipient maintains a 3.25 GPA at the College. The waivers are equal to the basic tuition rate up to a maximum of sixty-four (64) credit hours toward the baccalaureate degree.

3.7. Special Activity Waivers

College waivers made to attract students who have talent in activities other than varsity and junior varsity sports, including but not limited to, music, art, theatre or journalism.

3.8. Other Discretionary Waivers

Waivers developed by each College to provide opportunities for its students. Examples include Presidential Scholarships, the Peru State One Rate Any State waiver, and Senior Citizen waivers.

4. External Remission Programs

The State College System provides tuition remission through partnership with external entities who establish the eligibility requirements for entry and maintenance. Additionally, a number of state statutes require tuition remission for specific subsets of students with unique characteristics or attributes. Although no external support is provided to offset the tuition waiver, Colleges are obligated to grant waivers for students participating in the external remission programs outlined within this section.

4.1. TeamMates Program Award

- The TeamMates Program Award is a collaborative program with TeamMates designed for students who enroll as first-time freshmen at one (1) of the Colleges. Recipients are identified by TeamMates and must meet TeamMates criteria. The College award will be a waiver of one-half resident tuition for four (4) years (up to eighteen [18] credit

hours per semester up to a maximum of one hundred twenty-eight [128] hours toward an undergraduate degree).

- It is the responsibility of each recipient to confer with a financial aid representative from the College granting the award to discuss details of the award and the impact of any financial aid. This conversation should occur as soon as possible following notification of the award.
- Each College is authorized to award three (3) new waivers annually to TeamMates students who are Nebraska Residents, participated in the TeamMates program for a minimum of three (3) years, enrolled as new first-time freshmen at one (1) of the Colleges, enrolled in at least twelve (12) on-campus semester credit hours, in good academic standing with a minimum of a 2.5 GPA, and be an active member of TeamMates, including being partnered with a TeamMates postsecondary mentor.
- Additional limitations are in place for online courses taken in addition to the twelve (12) on-campus credit hours.
- The scholarships are not transferable from one College to another.

4.2 Yellow Ribbon GI Education Enhancement Program (Yellow Ribbon Program)

The Nebraska State College System is to provide tuition (and fees) assistance to eligible military veterans through the Yellow Ribbon Program. The Colleges will provide assistance in accordance with agreements in place with the Department of Veteran Affairs and in conjunction with education benefits provided by the federal government as a provision of the Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Act of 2008. This waiver is available for fall, spring, and summer terms during the applicable academic year.

4.3 Family of Deceased or Disabled Veterans (tuition and fees waiver)

This remission program is provided to Nebraska residents pursuant to the terms of Neb. Rev. Stat. §80-411. Effective beginning with the 2013 Fall Term, in addition to the tuition remission, the Colleges shall waive all fees remaining due after subtracting awarded federal financial aid grants and state scholarships and grants. This waiver is available for fall, spring, and summer terms during the applicable academic year. Remission recipients must have a parent, stepparent, or spouse who was a member of the United States armed forces who; died or a service-connected disability, injury or illness (either before or subsequent to discharge); is permanently and totally disabled as a result of military service; or while a member of the United States armed forces is classified as missing in action or as a prisoner of war during armed hostilities.

4.4 Member of Active Selected Reserve

This remissions program is provided to the Nebraska residents pursuant to the terms of Neb. Rev. Stat. §89-901. Those who qualify are entitled to a credit of seventy-five percent (75%) of tuition charges for a baccalaureate degree program or fifty percent (50%) of the resident tuition charges for a graduate degree program. This waiver is available for fall, spring, and summer terms during the applicable academic year and is not subject to a lifetime limit on tuition credit.

4.5 In the Line of Duty Dependent Education Benefit (tuition and fees waiver)

This remission program is provided pursuant to the terms of Neb. Rev. Stat. §85-2304. The In the Line of Duty Dependent Education Benefit is established for children of law enforcement officers and firefighters killed in the line of duty on or after April 23, 2009. The benefit is for full-time undergraduate students pursuing a baccalaureate degree. The Colleges will waive tuition and fees remaining after the application of federal financial aid grants and state scholarships and grants awarded to the eligible dependent. This waiver is available for fall, spring, and summer terms during the applicable academic year. To remain eligible, the dependent must comply with all requirements of the institution for continued attendance and award of a baccalaureate degree. Verification of dependent eligibility is also made by obtaining a certificate of eligibility. Dependent eligibility includes children of members of emergency medical services ambulance squads that are not associated with a paid or volunteer fire department.

4.6 Law Enforcement First Responder Education Waiver

This remission program is provided to eligible law-Law enforcement Enforcement Officers, Professional Firefighters and their legal dependents pursuant to the terms of the Nebraska Law Enforcement Education First Responder Recruitment and Retention Act (§85-2601 through 85-26064) (the Act). Those who qualify are entitled to a credit of one hundred percent (100%) of resident tuition charges after subtracting awarded federal financial aid grants and state scholarships and grants. This waiver is available for fall, spring and summer terms during the applicable academic year. ~~For purposes of the program, a law enforcement officer is any person who is responsible for the prevention or detection of crime or the enforcement of the penal, traffic, or highway laws of the State of Nebraska or any political subdivision of the state for more than one hundred (100) hours per year and who is authorized by law to make arrests.~~

- All applicants for the waiver must complete and submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- An law enforcement oOfficer, Firefighter or Dependent interested in the program is required to complete an application form and must provide a certificate verifying ~~his or her~~Officer's or Firefighter's satisfactory

performance in accordance with the Act as part of the application. Any Officer, Firefighter, or Dependent applying for a waiver for the first time after September 2, 2023, must also provide documentation annually from the Department of Revenue indicating all requirements of proof of employment and residency in Nebraska have been satisfied.

- A Dependent must execute the required agreement with the College regarding a five-year residency requirement prior to receiving the waiver.
- To qualify for the waiver, the ~~law-enforcement-o~~Officer must be pursuing a baccalaureate degree program related to a career in law enforcement. The NSCS ~~believes that~~has determined all of its baccalaureate degree programs would benefit law enforcement officers in furtherance of their careers; and therefore, the tuition waiver can be applied toward any baccalaureate program whether the officer is enrolled full or part-time.
- To qualify for the waiver, the Firefighter must be pursuing a baccalaureate degree in science or medicine that relates to a career in professional firefighting.
- To qualify for the waiver, a Dependent must be pursuing a baccalaureate degree.
- An ~~law-enforcement-o~~Officer, Firefighter, or Dependent must comply with all College requirements for continued attendance. The ~~o~~Officer, Firefighter or Dependent may receive the waiver for up to five (5) years if ~~the officer~~they otherwise continues to be eligible for participation. The ~~o~~Officer, Firefighter or Dependent must reapply for the waiver annually.
- Within forty-five (45) days after receipt of a completed application, the College shall give the officer-applicant written notice of ~~his or her~~their eligibility or ineligibility for the tuition waiver. If the officer-applicant is determined not to be eligible for the tuition waiver, the notice shall include the reason or reasons for such denial and the procedure for seeking reconsideration of the decision by the President. A copy of the notice shall also be sent to the President and the Chancellor.
- An officer-applicant seeking to appeal a denial must send a letter to the Chancellor within thirty (30) business days of the date of the denial. The letter must include the reasons the officer believes the denial to be in error.
- The Chancellor shall provide written notice of the decision to the officer-applicant consistent with the requirements set forth in the Act. If the Chancellor determines that the officer is eligible for the tuition waiver, the tuition waiver shall be provided as if the original application had been approved.

5. Reporting

The Colleges shall report to the Chancellor by October 15 of each year the number of waivers granted and the waivers amounts for each of the categories established within this policy. In certain circumstances the academic standing (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior) may also be requested for specific waiver types. The Chancellor shall provide a summary of remissions to the Board.

FORMS/APPENDICES:

None

SOURCE:

Legal Reference:	Neb. Rev. Stat. 80-411	Waiver of tuition at institutions of higher education; qualifications; application; Director of Veterans' Affairs; approval; effect; rules and regulations
	Neb. Rev. Stat. 85-504	State education institutions; fees; waiver
	Neb. Rev. Stat. 85-501	State educational institutions; nonresident fees
	Nb. Rev. Stat. 85-2304	<i>In the Line of Duty Dependent Education Benefit</i> ; established; eligibility; waiver of tuition and fees; application; notice; determination; effect
	Neb. Rev. Stat. 85-2603	Law Enforcement Education Act
	Neb. Rev. Stat. 80-901-80-903	Active Selected Reserve tuition credit

Policy Adopted: January 1977

Policy Revised: February 1983, October 1986, June 1993, September 1997, November 1998, April 2000, February 2004, June 2006, January 2009, April 2009, September 2009, January 2010, January 2011 – Effective July 2011, March 2011, November 2011, June 2012, September 2012, September 2013, January 2014, April 2014, September 2014, November 2014, June 2016, January 2017 – Effective Fall Semester 2017, November 2017, November 2018, September 2019, September 2020, September 2021, July 2022, March 2023